Weird, Spooky, Supernatural Stories

The BEYOND

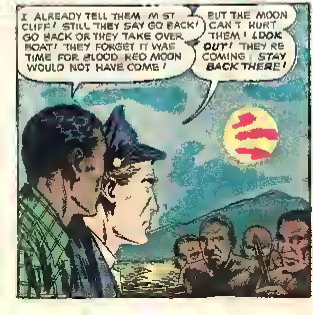
MAY 10c

ACE

SHE'S LYING, ALICE! DON'T YOU REALIZE WHAT THE CULT OF THE MOON GOD IS?
THE MOON GOD HAS CHOSEN YOU TO ENTER HIS WORLD IN THE BEYOND! YOU MUST PASS THROUGH THE FLAMES!

MOON-GOD'S Death-Dealing Idol

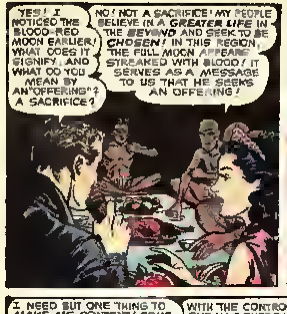
MIST CLIFF! OTHERS WANT TURN BACK! NO LIKE! THEY 'FRAID OF BLOOD ON MOON! LOOK UP THERE! MANY BAD THINGS ON THESE ISLANDS WHEN MOON COVERED WITH BLOOD!
WHAT? WHY, THE MOON DOES SEEM TO BE STREAKED WITH BLOOD, NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT! BUT WE CAN'T TURN BACK! TELL THEM THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR!
THERE ARE SOME UNCHARTED ISLANDS SPOTTED THROUGHOUT THE INDIAN OCEAN, AND MANY AN AGED MARINER WILL INFORM YOU THAT THEY'D BEST REMAIN UNCHARTED. FOR THERE'S ALSO A FORTUNE IN PEARLS TO BE FOUND THERE, AND THAT WAS WHAT BROUGHT CLIFF BANNING, WITH HIS CREW OF NATIVE DIVERS, INTO THAT OMINOUS REGION THAT SEEMED CURSED WITH SUPERSTITION AND THE BLOOD-RED MOON!


I ALREADY TELL THEM, MISTER CLIFF! STILL THEY SAY GO BACK! GO BACK OR THEY TAKE OVER BOAT! THEY FORGET IT WAS TIME FOR BLOOD-RED MOON WOULD NOT HAVE COME!
BUT THE MOON CAN'T HURT THEM! LOOK OUT! THEY'RE COMING! STAY BACK THERE!

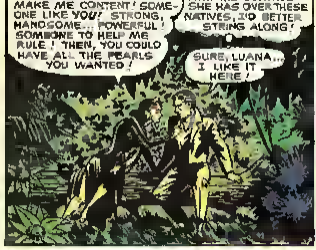
BUT THE FEAR-RIDDEN NATIVES COULD NOT BE DISSUADED. CLIFF BANNING'S EFFORTS ONLY RESULTED IN INFURIATING THE MEN FURTHER
STOP! NO! NO!

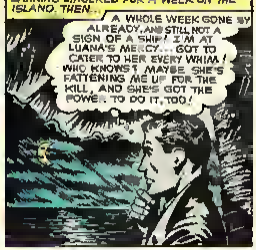
LIKE AN ICY DAGGER, THE POUNDING SEA NUMBED CLIFF. IT SEEMED A LIFETIME LATER, WHEN HE AWOKE TO FIND HIMSELF WASHED UP ON A BEACH...A RHYTHMIC BEAT OF NATIVE TOM-TOMS THUDDING INTO HIS EAR DRUMS--
OHHH! WHAT HAPPENED...? OH, I REMEMBER! SOME CRAZY BUSINESS ABOUT A BLOOD-RED MOON!
I MUST BE ON ONE OF THOSE UNCHARTED ISLANDS! BY THE SOUND OF THOSE DRUMS, THIS PLACE MUST BE INHABITED BY...HEY! THE MOON! IT WASN'T MY IMAGINATION! IT REALLY DOES LOOK LIKE THERE'S BLOOD ON IT!
WONDER IF THE NATIVES ARE FRIENDLY? WELL, ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT! I'LL FOLLOW THE SOUND OF THOSE TOM-TOMS!
WITH MUCH DIFFICULTY, CLIFF STUMBLED THROUGH THE DENSE JUNGLE, UNTIL HE CAME UPON A FASCINATING SIGHT...
WHA...! A BEAUTIFUL GIRL! SHE SEEMS TO BE LEADING THE NATIVES INTO THAT...THAT TEMPLE! SHE MUST BE THEIR PRINCESS OR SOMETHING! I'D BETTER JUST WATCH FOR A WHILE AND KEEP OUT OF SIGHT!
AT LENGTH, WHEN ALL HAD ENTERED THE TEMPLE, CLIFF VENTURED CLOSER, MAKING SURE HE WAS UNOBSERVED...
THIS IS SOME CEREMONY! AND THAT STATUE! I WONDER WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT?
COME CLOSER, ONE WHO HAS BEEN CHOSEN TO ENTER THE REALM OF THE MOON GOD!
THAT NATIVE IS GOING THROUGH THE DOOR IN THE STATUE! WHY, THOSE FLAMES WILL BURN HIM TO A CRISP! GREAT JUPITER! SHE--SHE'S GOING IN WITH HIM!
AND AS CLIFF LOOKED ON, AWE-STRICKEN, THE BEAUTIFUL GIRL AND THE NATIVE PROCEEDED THROUGH THE DOORWAY IN THE STATUE, THE FLAMES LICKING HUNGRILY ALL ABOUT THEM! GRADUALLY, THE INTENSE RAYS BLOTTED OUT THEIR FIGURES...

THIS MUST BE SOME SORT OF SACRIFICE! BUT WHY WOULD THAT GIRL STEP INTO THE FLAMES WITH THAT NATIVE? I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY'VE BOTH GONE TO THEIR DEATHS! MAYBE I CAN GET A BETTER VIEW FROM THE BACK!
AT THE TEMPLE'S REAR, CLIFF FOUND HIS WAY BLOCKED BY A LARGE WALL THAT ENCLOSED A YARD...
I'VE GOT A HUNCH THERE'S SOMETHING TRICKY HERE, AND THE ANSWER MUST BE BEHIND THIS WALL! OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO GET A GOOD LOOK FROM THIS TREE!
GAZING THROUGH THE DENSE FOLIAGE, OVER THE LEDGE OF THE WALL, CLIFF WAS GREETED BY A SIGHT THAT MADE HIS BLOOD FREEZE!
IT IS A TRICK! THOSE FLAMES NEVER EVEN TOUCH THE PEOPLE WHO COME THROUGH THAT DOOR! GREAT SCOTT! THAT GIRL! SHE'S A VAMPIRE!.. DRAINING THE BLOOD FROM HIS BODY!
THE MOON GOD IS PLEASED! HE HAS TAKEN NAGARU TO THE BEYOND!
WHAT A SET-UP! THIS VAMPIRE-WITCH HAS! BUT I'LL NEED HER HELP TO GET OUT OF HERE! I'D BETTER NOT LET HER KNOW I'M WISE!
REMAINING HIDDEN UNTIL THE CEREMONY ENDED, CLIFF FINALLY ENTERED THE VILLAGE, GREETING THE NATIVES IN FRIENDLY FASHION...
HELLO THERE, JIM LOST! MAYBE YOU CAN HELP ME!
WHO ARE YOU? WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?
ZSR! SXWY ZSS SZAR!
UH... MY BOAT OVERTURNED. JUST MANAGED TO SWIM TO SHORE. I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR PEARLS! NOW IT LOOKS LIKE I'M MAROONED!
WE HAVE PEARLS! HERE MANY PEARLS! BUT THEY ARE OFFERINGS TO THE MOON GOD ONLY!
MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE MENTIONED THE PEARLS! MY PEOPLE ARE MOON WORSHIPPERS!
DON'T GET ME WRONG! I DON'T COME TO STEAL THE PEARLS! I COME IN PEACE! WHAT'S THIS BUSINESS ABOUT A MOON GOD?
I, LUANA, AM THEIR HIGH PRIESTESS! EVERY MONTH WHEN THE MOON IS STREAKED WITH BLOOD WE MAKE AN OFFERING TO THE MOON GOD!


YES! I NOTICED THE BLOOD-RED MOON EARLIER! WHAT DOES IT SIGNIFY, AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY AN "OFFERING"? A SACRIFICE?
NO! NOT A SACRIFICE! MY PEOPLE BELIEVE IN A GREATER LIFE IN THE BEYOND AND SEEK TO BE CHOSEN! IN THIS REGION, THE FULL MOON APPEARS STREAKED WITH BLOOD! IT SERVES AS A MESSAGE TO US THAT HE SEEKS AN OFFERING!

HAD YOU ARRIVED EARLIER, YOU MIGHT HAVE WITNESSED OUR CEREMONY! OUR FINEST HUNTER WAS OFFERED USUALLY, THE OFFER IS OF SOMEONE WHO EXCELLS IN SOME WAY... SUCH AS STRENGTH OR BEAUTY!

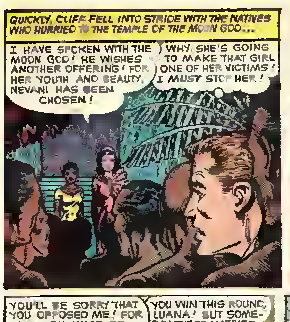

I NEED BUT ONE THING TO MAKE ME CONTENT! SOMEONE LIKE YOU! STRONG, HANDSOME... POWERFUL! SOMEONE TO HELP ME RULE! THEN, YOU COULD HAVE ALL THE PEARLS YOU WANTED!
WITH THE CONTROL SHE HAS OVER THESE NATIVES, I'D BETTER STRING ALONG!
SURE, LUANA... I LIKE IT HERE!

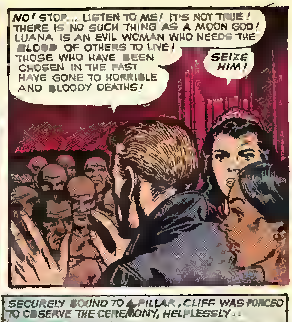

BANNING LINGERED FOR A WEEK ON THE ISLAND. THEN...
A WHOLE WEEK GONE BY ALREADY, AND STILL NOT A SIGN OF A SHIP! I'M AT LUANA'S MERCY... GOT TO CATER TO HER EVERY WHIM! WHO KNOWS? MAYBE SHE'S FATTENING ME UP FOR THE KILL, AND SHE'S GOT THE POWER TO DO IT, TOO!

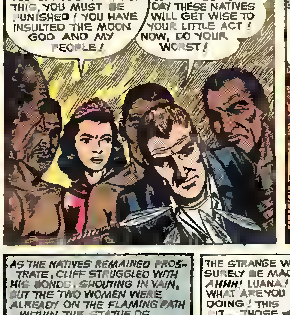
AND AS THE DAYS ROLLED BY, CLIFF FOUND IT NECESSARY TO TAKE DRASTIC MEASURES TO INSURE THE FACT THAT HE'D HAVE AN "OUT"...
GOOD! EVERYBODY'S SLEEPING! IF LUANA EVER FOUND OUT WHAT I WAS DOING, I'D BE A COOKED GOOSE!

WASTING AS LITTLE TIME AS POSSIBLE, HE GATHERED SEVERAL LOGS AND VINES!
AS LONG AS I KEEP ACCOMPLISHING SOMETHING EVERY NIGHT, IT'S WORTH THE RISK! I WONDER HOW LONG IT'LL TAKE BEFORE I CAN FINISH THIS RAFT?

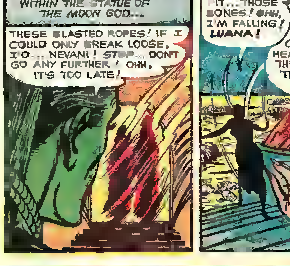
FINALLY THE RAFT WAS FINISHED. HE'D SPENT A FULL MONTH ON THE ISLAND, AND ON THE EVENING THAT HE'D HOPED TO TAKE HIS LEAVE...
JUST A FEW MORE HOURS 'TILL THEY'RE ASLEEP! AND THEN WHAT'RE THOSE NATIVES SO EXCITED ABOUT? THEY'RE POINTING AT GREAT CATFISH! THE MOON! IT'S STREAKED WITH BLOOD AGAIN!

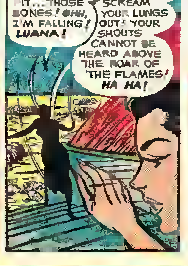

QUICKLY, CLIFF FELL INTO STRIDE WITH THE NATIVES WHO HURRIED TO THE TEMPLE OF THE MOON GOD...
I HAVE SICKEN WITH THE MOON GOD! HE WISHES ANOTHER OFFERING! FOR HER YOUTH AND BEAUTY NEVANI HAS BEEN CHOSEN!
WHY, SHE'S GOING TO MAKE THAT GIRL ONE OF HER VICTIMS! I MUST STOP HER!


NO! STOP... LISTEN TO ME! IT'S NOT TRUE! THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A MOON GOD! LUANA IS AN EVIL WOMAN WHO NEEDS THE BLOOD OF OTHERS TO LIVE! THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN CHOSEN IN THE PAST HAVE GONE TO HORRIBLE AND BLOODY DEATHS!
SEIZE HIM!


YOU'LL BE SORRY THAT YOU OPPOSED ME! FOR THIS, YOU MUST BE PUNISHED! YOU HAVE INSULTED THE MOON GOD AND MY PEOPLE!
YOU WIN THIS ROUND, LUANA! BUT SOMEDAY THESE NATIVES WILL GET WISE TO YOUR LITTLE ACT! NOW, DO YOUR WORST!

SECURELY BOUND TO A PILLAR, CLIFF WAS FORCED TO OBSERVE THE CEREMONY, HELPLESSLY...
COME, NEVANI! THE MOON GOD AWAITS! YOU ARE FORTUNATE THAT HE CHOOSES YOU! ENTER HIS DOMAIN!
NO NEVANI! LISTEN TO ME! DON'T GO! LUANA WILL KILL YOU AND TAKE YOUR BLOOD!


AS THE NATIVES REMAINED PROSTRATE, CLIFF STRUGGLED WITH HIS BONDS, SHOUTING IN VAIN, BUT THE TWO WOMEN WERE ALREADY ON THE FLAMING PATH WITHIN THE STATUE OF THE MOON GOD...
THESE BLASTED ROPES! IF I COULD ONLY BREAK LOOSE, I'D... NEVANI! STOP... DON'T GO ANY FURTHER! OHH, IT'S TOO LATE!


THE STRANGE WHITE MAN MUST SURELY BE MAD TO THINK...
AHHH! LUANA! WHAT ARE YOU DOING! THIS IT... THOSE BONES! OHH, I'M FALLING! LUANA!
SCREAM, LITTLE NEVANI! SCREAM YOUR LUNGS OUT! YOUR SHOUTS CANNOT BE HEARD ABOVE THE ROAR OF THE FLAMES! HA HA!

AND INSTANTLY, THE BAT-SHAPED LUANA WAS UPON THE FALLEN GIRL, HER SHARP FANGS GLEAMING AS THEY CLAIMED NEW VIGOR AND LIFE!
THE WHITE MAN! HE--HE SPOKE THE TRUTH! YOU ARE NO TRUE PRIESTESS OF THE MOON GOD! YOU'RE A... OHHHH!

AS EVENING OF THE FOLLOWING DAY APPROACHED, LUANA VISITED THE IMPRISONED CLIFF...
YOU SHALL REMAIN UNDER HEAVY GUARD UNTIL THE PASSING OF ANOTHER MOON! THEN, I SHALL ANNOUNCE THAT THE MOON GOD CHOOSES YOU!
WHY, YOU... HEY! LOOK THERE... IN THE SKY!
WHERE? OHH... THE SYMBOL OF THE MOON GOD! A BLOOD-STREAKED MOON! AN IT'S A FULL MOON... LIKE LAST NIGHT!
TWO FULL MOONS IN A ROW! I DON'T KNOW HOW IT'S POSSIBLE, BUT IT MUST BE A SYMBOL OF DEATH! AND THIS TIME IT'S FOR YOU!
THIS STRANGE PHENOMENON FRIGHTENS ME NOT! I SHALL NOT HAVE TO WAIT A MONTH NOW, TO RID MYSELF OF YOU! GUARDS, RELEASE HIM! TAKE HIM TO THE ARENA! PREPARE HIM FOR THE GAMES!
EVEN THE POWER YOU HOLD OVER THESE SUPERSTITIOUS NATIVES WON'T SAVE YOU NOW, LUANA!
FORCED INTO THE ARENA WITH THE MOST POWERFUL NATIVES, CLIFF QUICKLY GOT THE IDEA...
THE MOON GOD IS DISSATISFIED WITH THE LAST OFFERING AND DEMANDS ANOTHER! THIS TIME THE CHOSEN ONE MUST BE STRONG AND POWERFUL! HE WHO WINS IN THE GAMES SHALL BE OFFERED!
I GET IT NOW! EITHER WAY, I'M SURE TO LOSE!
IF I LOSE IN THE GAMES, I DIE... BUT IF I WIN, I'M THE NEXT "OFFERING" TO THE MOON GOD! WELL, I'VE GOT TO HAVE TIME, SO I'D BETTER MAKE SURE I WIN! THESE NATIVES ARE PRETTY SLOW AND CLUMSY! MAYBE A LITTLE CAREFUL FOOTWORK AND SOME JUDO WILL HELP!
UGHHH!
OOOFF!
HIS LIFE AT STAKE, CLIFF USED EVERY TRICK HE KNEW IN PROFESSIONAL BOXING AND WRESTLING - DODGING, TRIPPING, LUNGING! AT LAST...
THERE! THAT OUGHT TO DO IT!
OOOFF!
UGHH!
MAYBE I CAN MAKE A DASH FOR THE RAFT AND... OH OH! THOSE NATIVES ARE ALERT! THEY'VE GOT ME SURROUNDED!
LET THE CEREMONY BEGIN! THE WHITE STRANGER HAS BEEN CHOSEN! TAKE HIM TO THE TEMPLE!

AT SPEAR POINT, CLIFF WAS FORCED TO THE TEMPLE AND PRODDED INTO MOUNTING THE STAIRS TOWARD THE DOORWAY OF DEATH...

COME! THERE IS NOTHING TO SAVE YOU NOW! YOU SEE, YOU WERE MISTAKEN ABOUT THE MOON ENDANGERING ME!

EVER ALERT, OR A POSSIBLE MEANS OF ESCAPE, CLIFF ENTERED WITH LUANA... AT THE EDGE OF THE PIT, ON INTUITION, HE QUICKLY DUCKED, AND...

SORRY I CAN'T BE TOO CO-OPERATIVE, LUANA! I NEVER AM WITH PEOPLE WHO ARE AFTER MY BLOOD!

WHA...? OH, I'M FALLING!

THAT SPLIT THIGH-BONE OF ONE OF HER VICTIMS... IT HELPED HER HEART! WHAT A HORRIBLE WAY TO DIE! BUT IT'S ONLY FITTING IN HER CASE! NOW, HOW AM I GOING TO GET PAST THOSE NATIVES?

LISTEN, ALL OF YOU! YOUR HIGH PRIESTESS IS DEAD! HER OWN EVIL HAS CLAIMED HER! I RETURN FROM THE FLAMES ALIVE! YOU MUST BELIEVE ME! I'M YOUR FRIEND!

LIES! HE HAS KILLED LUANA! HE MUST DIE! SLAY HIM!

DODGING THE SPEAR OF THE NEAREST NATIVE, CLIFF GRABBED HIM, LIFTED HIM HIGH ABOVE HIS HEAD, AND HURLED HIM AT THE OTHERS...

OKAY, BOYS... IF YOU WANT TO CONTINUE BEING FOOLS, GO AHEAD! BUT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO INCLUDE ME IN YOUR PLANS!

ARGHH! OOOFF!

BOUNDING PAST THE PRONE NATIVES, CLIFF SPED FROM THE TEMPLE INTO THE JUNGLE... AT THE POINT OF EXHAUSTION, HE MANAGED TO TUG HIS RAFT INTO THE SURF...

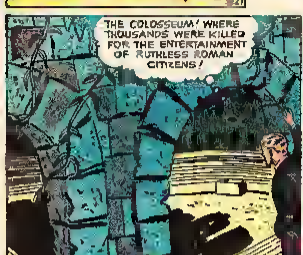
I CAN'T GO ANY FURTHER! GOT TO GET THIS THING OUT — WHERE THEIR SPEARS CAN'T REACH ME! GETTING DIZZY... EVERYTHING SEEMS HAZY — LIKE I'VE HAD SOME HORRIBLE DREAM!

IT'S ALL SO FOGGY — LIKE IT NEVER HAPPENED! WHAT'S THIS? WHY, IT'S LUANA'S FEARLED CORONET! COULD IT REALLY BE THAT... WELL, NO SENSE IN TRYING TO EXPLAIN IT! I CAME FOR PEARLS... AND I GOT THEM!

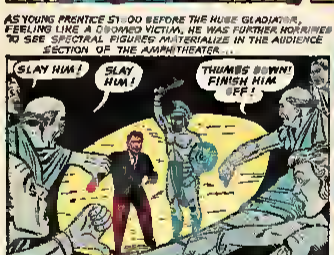
THE END

TRUE TALES of the SUPERNATURAL

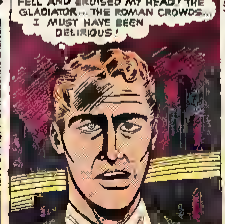
NO TOUR OF ROME WOULD BE COMPLETE WITHOUT A VISIT TO THE COLOSSEUM, SCENE OF SPORTIVE EVENTS AND BRUTAL SLAUGHTER IN THE DAYS OF THE EARLY ROMAN EMPIRE. HORRIBLE GAMES HELD FOR THE DELIGHT OF THE CRUEL EMPERORS AND THEIR BLOODTHIRSTY SUBJECTS... ONE NIGHT, IN 1926, ALFRED PRENTICE, AN AMERICAN, ENTERED THE ANCIENT STRUCTURE AND STOOD IN THE CENTER OF ITS IMMENSE ARENA, AS A FULL MOON SHONE DOWN ON HIM...



AS YOUNG PRENTICE STOOD BEFORE THE HUGE GLADIATOR, FEELING LIKE A DOOMED VICTIM, HE WAS FURTHER HORRIFIED TO SEE SPECTRAL FIGURES MATERIALIZE IN THE AUDIENCE SECTION OF THE AMPHITHEATER...

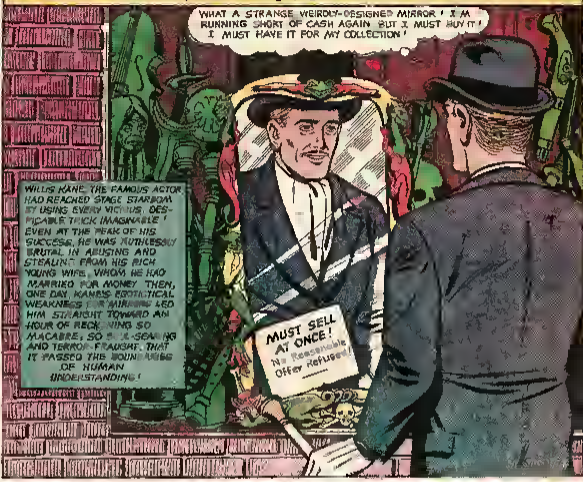


PRENTICE FELL TO THE GROUND, UNCONSCIOUS. AT DAWN THE NEXT DAY, HE WAS DISCOVERED BY AN ITALIAN POLICE SERGEANT...



ALFRED PRENTICE STILL SPEAKS OF THIS INCIDENT AS THE RESULT OF DELIRIUM FROM A SHOCKING BLOW, ASSUMING THAT HE HAD STUMBLED SOMEHOW IN THE ARENA DURING HIS SOLO TOUR THERE IN THE MOONLIGHT. AND YET, WHO CAN SAY THAT THE EXPERIENCE JUST DEPICTED DID NOT ACTUALLY TAKE PLACE THAT STRANGE NIGHT IN THE COLOSSEUM? WHAT DO YOU THINK, READERS?

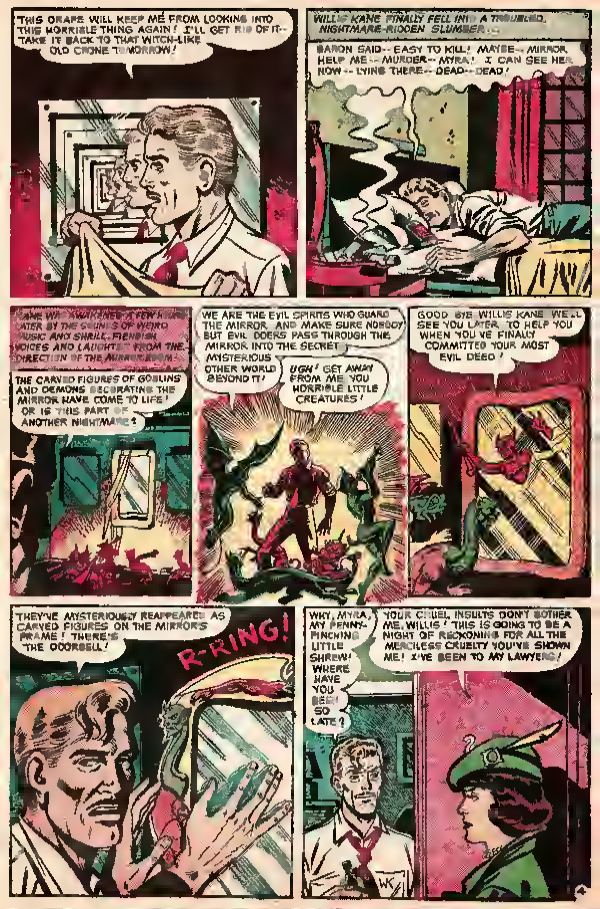
The OTHER SIDE of the MACABRE MIRROR


WHAT A STRANGE WEIRDLY-DESIGNED MIRROR! I'M RUNNING SHORT OF CASH AGAIN BUT I MUST BUY IT! I MUST HAVE IT FOR MY COLLECTION!
WILLIS KANE, THE FAMOUS ACTOR HAD REACHED SPACE STARDOM BY USING EVERY VICIOUS, DESPICABLE TRICK IMAGINABLE! EVEN AT THE PEAK OF HIS SUCCESS, HE WAS RUTHLESSLY BRUTAL IN ABUSING AND STEALING FROM HIS RICH YOUNG WIFE, WHOM HE HAD MARRIED FOR MONEY! THEN, ONE DAY, KANE'S EGOTISTICAL WEAKNESS FOR MIRRORS LED HIM STRAIGHT TOWARD AN HOUR OF RECKONING SO MACABRE, SO SOUL-SEARING AND TERROR-FRAUGHT, THAT IT PASSED THE BOUNDARIES OF HUMAN UNDERSTANDING!
MUST SELL AT ONCE! No Reasonable Offer Refused

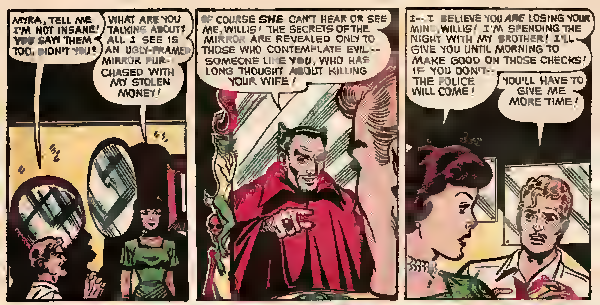
YES SIR, A TRULY FINE AND UNUSUAL MIRROR! WITH A FASCINATING HISTORY BEHIND IT, TOO!
NEVER MIND THE BUNKUM! TO GET A STEEPER PRICE OUT OF ME? WHO WROTE THAT SILLY MESSAGE ACROSS THE FRONT OF THE MIRROR? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
WARNING! DO NOT LOOK INTO ME! I HAVE WITNESSED SOMETHING HORRIBLE! I CANNOT STAND ANY MORE!
WRITING ON THE MIRROR, MISTER? I DON'T UNDERSTAND! I'M NEARSIGHTED BUT EVEN UP CLOSE LIKE THIS I SEE NO WRITING!
OF COURSE THERE'S SOMETHING ON IT! GET YOUR STUPID, SHRUNKEN OLD HEAD OUT OF THE WAY AND I'LL SHOW YOU!

WHY, YOU--YOU'RE RIGHT! THE WRITINGS VANISHED! I MUST'VE IMAGINED IT! MY MIND'S BEEN UPSET LATELY, ANYHOW! I'LL GIVE YOU $50 FOR THIS ATROCITY!
BUT IT'S WORTH AT LEAST $500! THE FINEST GLASS MADE IN EUROPE! BUT I DO WANT TO GET RID OF IT! ALL RIGHT--THE MIRROR IS YOURS!
I'M GLAD TO HAVE IT OUT OF MY SIGHT! IT'S A GOOD THING IT CAN'T TALK, OR ITD RAISE THE HAIR RIGHT OFF YOUR SCALP! IT BELONGED TO A BAVARIAN BARON, A SECOND BLUEBEARD, WHO SUPPOSEDLY MURDERED SIX WIVES BEFORE HE HIMSELF MYSTERIOUSLY VANISHED, NEVER TO BE SEEN AGAIN!
AH! JUST A GHOULISH TALE PASSED ON BY THE MIRROR'S FORMER OWNERS TO ENHANCE ITS ALLURE!
WHATEVER YOU SAY, MISTER! HEE HEE HEE! BUT DIDN'T SAY I DIDN'T WARN YOU!
FEW MINUTES LATER, WILLIS KANE RETURNED TO HIS APARTMENT AND WENT STRAIGHT TO HIS COLLECTION OF MIRRORS!
WHAT A COLLECTOR'S ITEM! TOOK MY LAST FIFTY, BUT I CAN FORGE ANOTHER CHECK ON MY WIFE, MYRA, TONIGHT! APPARENTLY, SHE ISN'T GOING TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT THE OTHERS, OR IS SO STUPID SHE HASN'T EVEN FOUND OUT ABOUT THEM!
IF I COULD ONLY THINK OF SOME FOOLPROOF METHOD OF GETTING RID OF HER, I'D HAVE HER WHOLE VAST FORTUNE! THERE, THAT'S THE PLACE FOR IT!
WHA...! MY REFLECTION IS VANISHED FROM THE MIRROR! THERE'S THE IMAGE OF A WOMAN THERE, INSTEAD!
HELLO! I'M BERYL, THE BARON'S WIFE!
WHAT MADNESS IS THIS? WHAT KIND OF TRICKERY? I--I--CAN'T BE REALLY SEEING THIS! LOOK OUT! THOSE HANDS... THE ROPE! HE'S GOING TO STRANGLE YOU!
2

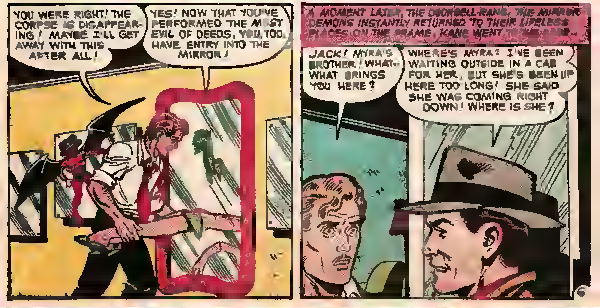
LUIS KANE SAW THE STRANGLER'S NOOSE CLOSE ABOUT THE WOMAN HE LOVED...
AIEEE!
THE--THE IMAGE IN THE MIRROR--IT HAS CHANGED AGAIN! WHO--WHO ARE YOU?
I AM BARON DUKAL, ORIGINAL OWNER OF THIS MIRROR OF MADNESS, INTO WHICH YOU ARE NOW PEERING! ITS GLASS WAS MADE FROM THE SAND OF PIRATES' GRAVES, MADE ESPECIALLY FOR ME BY MY COURT SORCERER!
THE MIRROR IS A REFUGE FOR EVIL-DOERS. A DOORWAY--A RETREAT INTO ANOTHER WORLD! ANYONE WHO ENTERS HEREIN WILL BE ETERNALLY SAFE FROM HUMAN PUNISHMENT FOR HIS EVIL DEEDS... BUT HE MAY NEVER LEAVE AGAIN!
NO! YOU'RE LYING! MY IMAGINATION IS PLAYING JOKES ON ME! OR--OR ELSE I'M GOING MAD!
YOU WERE THINKING BEFORE OF KILLING YOUR WIFE! YOU SAW HOW EASILY I DID AWAY WITH ONE OF MINE! AND NEVER GOT CAUGHT! THE SECOND ONE WAS DESTROYED EVEN MORE EASILY! WATCH!
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS NONSENSE! I'LL PROVE I'M RIGHT AND THAT THERE CAN'T BE ANY SUCH MAGIC IN A MIRROR! I'LL SMASH IT TO SMITHEREENS!
IN VICIOUS, FRIGHTENED FURY THE TORTURED MANE HURLED THE HEAVY VASE SMASHING INTO THE MIRROR, ONLY TO FIND THAT--
IT--IT DIDN'T BREAK THE MIRROR! IT SEEMS TO BE GOING RIGHT ON THROUGH THE GLASS WITHOUT HARMING IT!
THAT VASE COULDN'T HAVE JUST DISAPPEARED INTO THE MIRROR--AND YET IT DID! THE VASE IS GONE, BUT THE MIRROR IS INTACT! BUT AT LEAST THE IMAGE OF THE MURDEROUS BARON HAS VANISHED, TOO!


THIS DRAPE WILL KEEP ME FROM LOOKING INTO THIS HORRIBLE THING AGAIN! I'LL GET RID OF IT-TAKE IT BACK TO THAT WITCH-LIKE OLD CRONE TOMORROW!
WILLIS KANE FINALLY FELL INTO A TROUBLED, NIGHTMARE-RIDDEN SLUMBER...
BARON SAID--EASY TO KILL! MAYBE--MIRROR, HELP ME--MURDER--MYRA! I CAN SEE HER NOW--LYING THERE--DEAD--DEAD!
SOME HOURS AND A FEW HOURS LATER, BY THE SOUNDS OF WEIRD MUSIC AND SHRILL, FIENDISH VOICES AND LAUGHTER FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE MIRROR ROOM--
THE CARVED FIGURES OF GOBLINS AND DEMONS DECORATING THE MIRROR HAVE COME TO LIFE! OR IS THIS PART OF ANOTHER NIGHTMARE?
WE ARE THE EVIL SPIRITS WHO GUARD THE MIRROR, AND MAKE SURE NOBODY BUT EVIL DOERS PASS THROUGH THE MIRROR INTO THE SECRET MYSTERIOUS OTHER WORLD BEYOND IT!
UGH! GET AWAY FROM ME YOU HORRIBLE LITTLE CREATURES!
GOOD BYE, WILLIS KANE. WE'LL SEE YOU LATER, TO HELP YOU WHEN YOU'VE FINALLY COMMITTED YOUR MOST EVIL DEED!
THEY'VE MYSTERIOUSLY REAPPEARED AS CARVED FIGURES ON THE MIRROR'S FRAME! THERE'S THE DOORBELL!
R-RING!
WHY, MYRA, MY PENNY-PINCHING LITTLE SHREW! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN SO LATE?
YOUR CRUEL INSULTS DON'T BOTHER ME, WILLIS! THIS IS GOING TO BE A NIGHT OF RECKONING FOR ALL THE HEARTLESS CRUELTY YOU'VE SHOWN ME! I'VE BEEN TO MY LAWYER'S!

YOUR LAWYERS? WHAT FOR, MYRA?
YOU'VE FORGED MY NAME ON THREE CHECKS FOR OVER $5,000! THAT'S THE LAST STRAW, WILLIS. WHEN YOU START STEALING FROM ME! I'VE BEEN SICK OF YOUR HEAVY DRINKING, PHILANDERING AND BRUTALITY! NOW I'M GOING TO HAVE YOU ARRESTED FOR FORGERY!
NO! NO, MYRA! YOU CAN'T DO THAT! MY REPUTATION... AND... AND I COULDN'T STAND... GOING TO PRISON! GIVE ME ANOTHER CHANCE!
ABSOLUTELY NOT! I'M THROUGH! WHEN YOU'RE IMPRISONED, I'M GETTING A DIVORCE!
AMRA, PERHAPS I'M NOT RESPONSIBLE! I... I THINK I'M GOING MAD! COME TO THE MIRROR ROOM!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WAIT, WILLIS! I--I'M AFRAID OF YOU!
PLEASE, JUST LOOK AT MY NEW MIRROR, MYRA! I WANT YOU... TO CHECK ON SOMETHING FOR ME!
ALL RIGHT, WILLIS! YOU DON'T HAVE TO TEAR MY ARM OFF!
AS KANE GAZED INTO THE MIRROR, HIS OWN REFLECTION DISAPPEARED, AND...
YOU HAVE A NICE WIFE, WILLIS KANE! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE TREATED HER SO CRUELLY ALL THESE YEARS! YOU'VE BEEN A BRUTAL, EVIL MAN, WILLIS KANE! YOU...
THEN THE ACCUSING VOICE OF THE MIRROR WOMAN WAS CUT OFF AS A GAUDY DAGGER FLASHED TOWARD HER THROAT, AND...
ARGHHH!
THAT'S HOW I GOT RID OF A NAGGING, THREATENING WIFE, WILLIS KANE! I KILLED SIX OF THEM AND THRUST THEIR CORPSES THROUGH THE MIRROR AND THEY DISAPPEARED! YOU CAN DO THE SAME!
HE'S COME BACK! HE'S IN THE MIRROR AGAIN!


MYRA, TELL ME I'M NOT INSANE! YOU SAW THEM, ALL 3 SEE IS TOO, DIDN'T YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? YOU SAW THEM, ALL 3 SEE IS AN UGLY-FRAMED MIRROR FUR-CHASED WITH MY STOLEN MONEY!
OF COURSE SHE CAN'T HEAR OR SEE ME, WILLIS! THE SECRETS OF THE MIRROR ARE REVEALED ONLY TO THOSE WHO CONTEMPLATE EVIL--SOMEONE LIKE YOU, WHO HAS LONG THOUGHT ABOUT KILLING YOUR WIFE!
I--I BELIEVE YOU ARE LOSING YOUR MIN...WILLIS! I'M SPENDING THE NIGHT WITH MY BROTHER! I'LL GIVE YOU UNTIL MORNING TO MAKE GOOD ON THOSE CHECKS! IF YOU DON'T--THE POLICE WILL COME!
YOU'LL HAVE TO GIVE ME MORE TIME!

NO, WILLIS! YOU DESERVE NO MERCY! YOU...UGH!
THEN I'LL STOP YOU THIS WAY! YOU WON'T RUIN MY REPUTATION--CUT ME OFF FROM YOUR WEALTH--HAVE ME THROWN INTO PRISON!
NOW I'VE COMMITTED MURDER! WHAT CAN I DO?
DON'T FRET, WILLIS KANE! WE'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO ESCAPE PUNISHMENT FOR YOUR DEED! YOU CAN GET RID OF HER--THRU THE MIRROR! AND NOBODY WILL EVER KNOW!

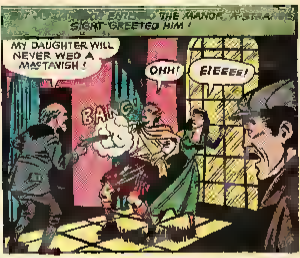

YOU WERE RIGHT! THE CORPSE IS DISAPPEARING! MARVEL! I'LL GET AWAY WITH THIS AFTER ALL!
YES! NOW THAT YOU'VE PERFORMED THE MOST EVIL OF DEEDS, YOU, TOO, HAVE ENTRY INTO THE MIRROR!
A MOMENT LATER, THE CHORRELL-KANE, THE MIRROR DEMONS INSTANTLY RETURNED TO THEIR LIFELESS PLACES ON THE FRAME, KANE WENT TO THE DOOR...
JACK! MYRA'S BROTHER! WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?
WHERE'S MYRA? I'VE BEEN WAITING OUTSIDE IN A CAB FOR HER, BUT SHE'S BEEN UP HERE TOO LONG! SHE SAID SHE WAS COMING RIGHT DOWN! WHERE IS SHE?

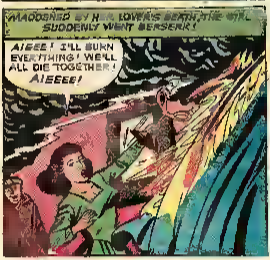
WILLIS KANE GREW PANICKY AND NERVOUSLY EXPRESSED HIS GUILT, IN STAMMERING, CONFUSED SENTENCES. AS ANNA'S BROTHER SEARCHED THE APARTMENT, FINALLY...
I--I TOLD YOU BEFORE, JACK! SHE WASN'T HERE--I MEAN SHE WAS HERE, BUT LEFT, AND--
YOU MEAN YOU KILLED HER, AND HID HER BODY! HERE, ARE BLOOD STAINS! I'M GOING FOR THE POLICE!
AFTER JACK RUSHED OUT TO GET THE POLICE, WILLIS KANE LOCKED HIMSELF IN AND TRIED TO FIGURE A WAY OUT. BUT AFTER A WHILE...
IT'S JACK, WITH THE POLICE!
WE'LL BREAK THE DOOR DOWN, IF YOU DON'T OPEN UP!
THERE HE GOES INTO THE MIRROR ROOM! AFTER HIM!
YOU'LL NEVER GET ME!
THIS IS MY ONLY CHANCE! IT WORKS! I'M VANISHING RIGHT INTO THE MIRROR!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT! I KNOW HE CAME IN HERE AND DIDN'T COME OUT AGAIN!
I MUST'VE DISAPPEARED INTO THIN AIR! WE'VE SEARCHED EVERY POSSIBLE HIDING PLACE AND HE'S GONE!
HA! HA! YOU FOOLS! I'M SAFE! SAFE!
NO! NO! LET ME OUT OF HERE!
Thanks for releasing me from this world of Mirrored Evil by your entrance! Sometimes you're so entranced in a mass of Death-by-living nature that I thought by turning nature into Madness! Maybe the mirrors of Madness will do the trick! Maybe you'll suffer two million years looking at your own agonies, looking at yours but not reflecting me!
Mr. Bizarre
IN THE NEXT ROW WE'LL SEE, THE NEWSPAPERS MAKE MUCH OF THE STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE OF FAMED ACTOR, WILLIS KANE, AND HIS WIFE, ANNA! THEY WOULD HAVE CREATED MORE OF A SENSATION, HAD THEY KNOWN WHERE HE REALLY WAS, AND WOULD BE FOR YEARS OF HELLISH TORMENT!
AIEEE!

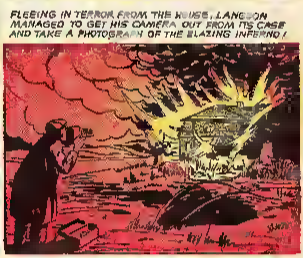
TRUE TALES of the SUPERNATURAL

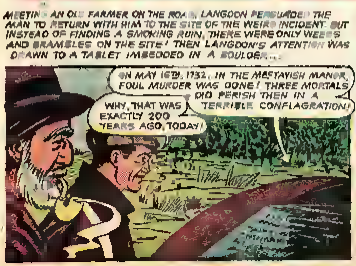
#22

IN THE SPRING OF 1932, REX LANGDON, A PHOTOGRAPHER ON THE STAFF OF A LONDON MAGAZINE WAS SPENDING A FEW WEEKS IN SCOTLAND WHERE HE WAS TO TAKE PICTURES OF THE COUNTRYSIDE TO ACCOMPANY AN ARTICLE ON THE HISTORY OF THE SCOTTISH CLANS. LATE ONE AFTERNOON, HE FOUND HIMSELF SUDDENLY ENGULFED IN A MIST ON THE SCOTTISH MOORS OUTSIDE THE TOWN WHERE HE WAS STAYING...






FLEEING IN TERROR FROM THE HOUSE, LANGDON MANAGED TO GET HIS CAMERA OUT FROM ITS CASE AND TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE BLAZING INFERNO!


MEETING AN OLD FARMER ON THE ROAD, LANGDON PERSUADED THE MAN TO RETURN WITH HIM TO THE SITE OF THE WEIRD INCIDENT. BUT INSTEAD OF FINDING A SMOKING RUIN, THERE WERE ONLY WEEDS AND BRAMBLES ON THE SITE! THEN LANGDON'S ATTENTION WAS DRAWN TO A TABLET IMBEDDED IN A BOULDER...
ON MAY 16TH, 1732, IN THE MASTAVISH MANOR, FOUL MURDER WAS DONE! THREE MORTALS DID PERISH THEN IN A TERRIBLE CONFLAGRATION!
WHY, THAT WAS EXACTLY 200 YEARS AGO, TODAY!

REX LANGDON'S EXPERIENCE HAS DEFIED LOGICAL EXPLANATION BY STUDENTS OF MACABRE OCCURRENCES. JUST ANOTHER INEXPLICABLE INCIDENT IN THE ANNALS OF THE SUPERNATURAL!

RECRUITS FOR THE LEGION of the UNDEAD

MUST'VE BEEN A CRANK-CALL YOUR PAPER GOT/ NOTHING EXCITING EVER HAPPENS HERE OUR CORPSES ARE QUIET AND GENTLEMANLY COME ON--I'LL SHOW YOU AROUND/

XIP POWELL WORKED HIS WAY THROUGH MEDICAL SCHOOL BY HOLDING DOWN THE LATE SHIFT AS WATCHMAN AT THE CITY MORGUE IT WAS A DULL, ROUTINE JOB UNTIL THE NIGHT MARGO, THE PRETTY LITTLE CUB REPORTER, APPEARED, SAYING HER PAPER HAD RECEIVED A CALL THAT A WEIRD AND UNUSUAL STORY WAS GOING TO BREAK THERE AND THEN THE MONOTONY ERUPTED INTO A NIGHTMARE OF MACABRE AND TERROR-FRAUGHT SCENES/

THIS PLACE GIVES ME THE CREEPS/

WE TOOK IN FIVE NEW "GUESTS" TODAY/ RATHER UNUSUAL. ALL VICTIMS OF VIOLENT ACCIDENTS. ONE DIED UNDER SUBWAY WHEELS--ONE WAS STRUCK BY A TRUCK. ANOTHER LEAPED FROM A TALL BUILDING/

HOW HORRIBLE/

STRANGE COINCIDENCE WAS THAT THEY WERE ALL HOMELESS, UNIDENTIFIABLE VAGRANTS. AND--HEY/ WHAT'S THAT TAPPING, RAPPING SOUND?

I-I DON'T KNOW/ BUT IT--IT'S COMING FROM ONE OF THOSE WALL COFFINS/

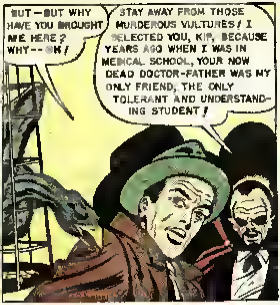
TAP! TAP!

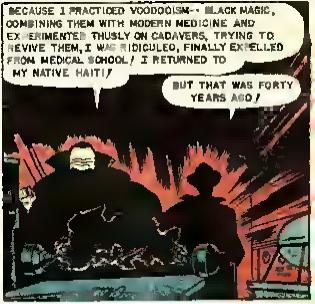
TAP! TAP!

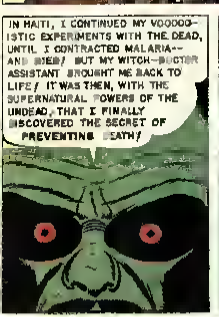
OUR IMAGINATIONS MUST BE GOING HAYWIRE/ THIS WAS THE HOBO STRUCK BY A TRUCK TODAY/ HE'S VERY MUCH DEAD AND COULDN'T POSSIBLY CAUSE ANY COMMOTION, BUT I'LL LOOK TO MAKE SURE/
MAYBE YOU'D BETTER NOT/ I--I'M SCARED/
GOOD HEAVENS/ THERE-THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOME MISTAKE/ HE-IT-MUST NOT HAVE BEEN REALLY DEAD/
THANK YOU, FRIEND/ SORRY TO MAKE SUCH A NUMPOS, BUT I HAD TO GET OUT/
EEEEKK/
I MUST RELEASE THE OTHERS NOW, TOO/
WAIT/ STOP/ YOU-- YOU CAN'T DO THIS/ I-- I DON'T UNDERSTAND/
THEY'RE ALL RISING FROM THE DEAD--ALL FIVE OF THE MEN BROUGHT IN TODAY, VICTIMS OF VIOLENT ACCIDENTS/ THIS IS FANTASTIC, UNBELIEVABLE/ OH OH/ MARGO'S FAINTED/
HURRY, FRIENDS/ WE HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE/
CAN'T LET THOSE GHOULY WALKING CORPSES GET OUT OF THE MORGUE/ HEY, YOU GUYS/ COME BACK HERE/
CRASH
THEY'RE CROSSING THE STREET/ THAT TRUCK/ THEY--THEY SEEM TO BE WALKING RIGHT INTO IT-- AND THROUGH IT/
OH, YOU CAME TO/ I TRIED TO CHASE DOWN THOSE ZOMBIES, BUT THEY DISAPPEARED IN THE FOG/ YOU ALL RIGHT?
I--I THINK SO/ I JUST CALLED THE POLICE/ THEY'LL BE HERE SOON/ WHAT--WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT, JIM?

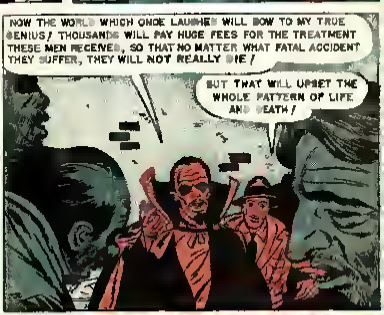
I DON'T KNOW/ BUT I DO KNOW THIS-- THE 3 MEN WERE ALL DEAD, WHEN THEY WERE BROUGHT IN HERE TODAY/ I WAS HERE WHEN THE CORONER EXAMINED THE LAST ONE/ THEY COULDN'T HAVE BEEN ALIVE/ MISTAKES LIKE THAT JUST AREN'T MADE/
BUT THEM, WHAT IS THE ANSWER, KIP?
KIP NEXT CHECKED THE FILES ON THE DEAD MEN, HOPING FOR A CLUE TO THIS TERRIFYING, BIZARRE MYSTERY.
HERE'S THE DATA CARD ON THAT LAST-- HEY/ WHAT'S THIS NOTE PINNED ON IT? LOOKS LIKE IT'S WRITTEN IN-- IN BLOOD/
You see the first to leave that the great Dr. LaStarza has learned the secret of victory over death! These men were killed by all the old tests! Yet no one they examined now/ Should no fish examine again/ I can be at me at Hi 3-7134-
LOOKS LIKE SOME MACABRE GAG/ THERE'S NO SUCH TELEPHONE EXCHANGE AND WHEN YOU READ THE NUMBER UPSIDE DOWN, IT SPELLS OUT H-E-L-L. THERE'S NO DR. LaSTARZA LISTED IN THE MEDICAL DIRECTORY, EITHER/
BUT THOSE MEN-- THOSE WALKING CORPSES-- WE SAW THEM/ AND THEIR LOCKER COFFINS ARE NOW EMPTY/
NOTHING TO LOSE BY DIALING THAT NUMBER AND SEE WHAT-- WAIT/ SOMEONE IS ANSWERING/
DO NOT SCOFF, KIP POWELL/ ONE MUST BELIEVE WHAT ONE SEES/ COME TO 714 TWENTY-FIRST STREET FOR MORE ENLIGHTENMENT/
THAT HOLLOW SEPULCHRAL VOICE/ AND HE KNEW MY NAME/ I--I'VE GOT TO LEARN THE ANSWER TO THIS WEIRD, OUT-OF-THE WORLD OCCURRENCE/
WHAT'S ALL THIS HOKUM ABOUT VANISHING CORPSES?
SWIFTLY KIP AND MARGO RELATED THEIR FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE.
HA HA/ THAT'S A WONDERFUL GAG, KID, BUT I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU MEDICAL STUDENTS AND YOUR PRANKS WITH CORPSES/ WHERE'D YOU HIDE 'EM?
IT'S NO JOKE, I TELL YOU/ HERE, READ THIS CARD I FOUND-- WHAT? THE CARDS SHRIVELED INTO DRY PARCHMENT/ THE BLOOD-WRITTEN MESSAGE HAS VANISHED/
3

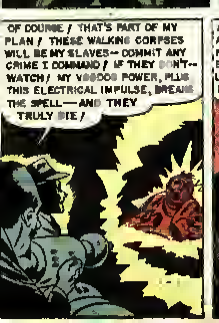
I KNOW THIS ALL SOUNDS RIDICULOUS/ BUT THERE MUST BE THIS DR. LASTARZA/ COME WITH ME TO 614 TWENTY-FIRST STREET/ HE'LL...
TWENTY-FIRST STREET'S ON MY BEAT AND THERE'S ONLY A VACANT LOT IN THE 600 BLOCK/ THIS GAG'S GONE FAR ENOUGH/ WE'RE GOIN' INSIDE AND CHECK IF THE CORPSES ARE REALLY MISSING/ IF THEY ARE, YOU'D BETTER FIND 'EM, OR WE'LL HAVE TO LOCK YOU UP/
KIP, COME BACK/ WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TO CHECK UP ON LASTARZA, MYSELF/ IF I HANG AROUND, THOSE COPS WILL PUT ME IN A CELL AND I WON'T BE ABLE TO SOLVE THIS THING; I'VE GOT TO FIND THE ANSWER/
A FEW MINUTES LATER, AT 614 TWENTY-FIRST STREET...
I REMEMBER NOW/ I PASS THIS BLOCK ON MY WAY TO SCHOOL EVERY MORNING AND THE COP WAS RIGHT/ IT ALWAYS WAS EMPTY/ THIS BUILDING WASN'T HERE THIS MORNING— I'M POSITIVE/
UH— I'M LOOKING FOR DR. LASTARZA?
I AM THE DOCTOR/ YOU WERE WISE TO COME— TO MOCK THE RIDICULE OF UNBELIEVERS/ ENTER, KIP POWELL/
THE DEAD MEN FROM THE MORGUE/
YES/ VAGRANTS WHO AGREED TO LET ME HYPNOTIZE THEM FOR A SMALL FEE/ THEN, IN MY POWER, THEY WERE SUBJECTED TO THE DEATH-REPELLENT PROCESS I'VE WORKED OUT/ FIRST THEY RECEIVED BRAIN-WAVE SHOCK/ THEN I INJECTED A FORMULA CONTAINING BLOOD FROM THE VULTURES/
SO TREATED, THEY WERE IMPERVIOUS TO EVEN THE MOST VIOLENT DEATHS TO WHICH I ORDERED THEM/ IN FIVE HOURS THEIR WOUNDS CLOSED, AND THEY REGAINED LIFE— OR AT LEAST, HALF-LIFE/


BUT—BUT WHY HAVE YOU BROUGHT ME HERE? WHY—OH!
I STAY AWAY FROM THOSE MURDEROUS VULTURES! I SELECTED YOU, KIP, BECAUSE YEARS AGO WHEN I WAS IN MEDICAL SCHOOL, YOUR NOW DEAD DOCTOR-FATHER WAS MY ONLY FRIEND, THE ONLY TOLERANT AND UNDERSTANDING STUDENT!


BECAUSE I PRACTICED VOODOOISM—BLACK MAGIC, COMBINING THEM WITH MODERN MEDICINE AND EXPERIMENTED THUSLY ON CADAVERS, TRYING TO REVIVE THEM, I WAS RIDICULED, FINALLY EXPELLED FROM MEDICAL SCHOOL! I RETURNED TO MY NATIVE HAITI!
BUT THAT WAS FORTY YEARS AGO!

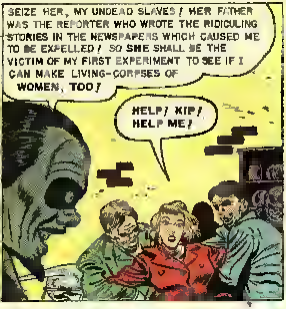

IN HAITI, I CONTINUED MY VOODOOISTIC EXPERIMENTS WITH THE DEAD, UNTIL I CONTRACTED MALARIA—AND DIED! BUT MY WITCH-DOCTOR ASSISTANT BROUGHT ME BACK TO LIFE! IT WAS THEN, WITH THE SUPERNATURAL POWERS OF THE UNDEAD, THAT I FINALLY DISCOVERED THE SECRET OF PREVENTING DEATH!


NOW THE WORLD WHICH ONCE LAUGHED WILL BOW TO MY TRUE GENIUS! THOUSANDS WILL PAY HUGE FEES FOR THE TREATMENT THESE MEN RECEIVED, SO THAT NO MATTER WHAT FATAL ACCIDENT THEY SUFFER, THEY WILL NOT REALLY DIE!
BUT THAT WILL UPSET THE WHOLE PATTERN OF LIFE AND DEATH!

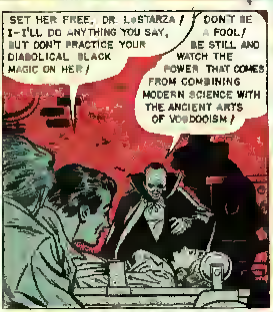

OF COURSE! THAT'S PART OF MY PLAN! THESE WALKING CORPSES WILL BE MY SLAVES—COMMIT ANY CRIME I COMMAND! IF THEY DON'T—WATCH! MY VOODOO POWER, PLUS THIS ELECTRICAL IMPULSE, BREAKS THE SPELL—AND THEY TRULY DIE!

AND YOU WILL BE MY ASSISTANT, KIP POWELL! I'LL NEED HELP! I SELECTED YOU BECAUSE YOUR FATHER NEVER LAUGHED AT ME! AH, THE DOORBELL!
NO! I CAN'T TAKE PART IN ANY SUCH EVIL WITCHCRAFT! IT'S SATANIC!

KIP POWELL WAITED, FROZEN WITH HORROR, TRYING TO DECIDE WHETHER TO FLEE FROM THIS CURSED, UNHOLY PLACE WHILE HE HAD THE CHANCE. THEN—
YOUR GIRL-REPORTER FRIEND COULDN'T RESIST COMING HERE TO INVESTIGATE—JUST AS I FIGURED!
MARGO! LEAVE, BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE!


SEIZE HER, MY UNDEAD SLAVES! HER FATHER WAS THE REPORTER WHO WROTE THE RIDICULING STORIES IN THE NEWSPAPERS WHICH CAUSED ME TO BE EXPELLED! SO SHE SHALL BE THE VICTIM OF MY FIRST EXPERIMENT TO SEE IF I CAN MAKE LIVING-CORPSES OF WOMEN, TOO!
HELP! KIP! HELP ME!

LEAVE HER ALONE!
EASY, KIP! YOU'RE WASTING YOUR STRENGTH! YOU CAN'T KILL THE UNDEAD BY ORDINARY MEANS!


SET HER FREE, DR. LASTARZA! I—I'LL DO ANYTHING YOU SAY, BUT DON'T PRACTICE YOUR DIABOLICAL BLACK MAGIC ON HER!
DON'T BE A FOOL! BE STILL AND WATCH THE POWER THAT COMES FROM COMBINING MODERN SCIENCE WITH THE ANCIENT ARTS OF VOODOOISM!

WEAK WITH HORROR, KIP RESTED FROM HIS FUTILE STRUGGLES AND LISTENED TO DR. LASTARZA'S TOMB-COLD VOICE MUMBLING EERIE INCANTATIONS!
SATANO UMERA BE MAL! VOCUNBO DECEASA MI DIABLO! HALESIA NERA MAGICA!
OOOOOOH! (GROAN) I—FEEL WEAK—DREAMY—FLOATING—OUT OF— WORLD!

NO! STOP! DON'T TURN ON THOSE BRAIN-SHOCK WAVES!
YOU FOOLS! YOU'VE LET HIM GO!

THE DOCTOR SHOWED ME THAT THIS RAY MACHINE WILL BRING COMPLETE AND FINAL DEATH TO THESE MONSTERS! I'VE GOT TO USE IT!
THESE RAVENOUS CARRION-EATERS WILL STOP YOU FROM SPOILING MY PLANS!

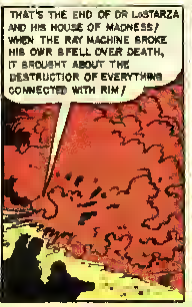
BAH! THOSE FOUL DEATH BIRDS PREFER CORPSES TO THE LIVING! THEY'RE BY-PASSING KIP, FOR THEM!

AFTER BREAKING THE SPELL ON THE REMAINING ZOMBIES.....
PERHAPS THE DEATH RAYS WILL DESTROY THEIR CREATOR, TOO!
NO! DON'T! ONCE I PASS FROM MY UNDEAD STATE, I'M DOOMED TO AN ETERNITY OF TORTURE IN THE FIERY BLACKNESS OF THE NETHER REGIONS! ARRRRRGH!

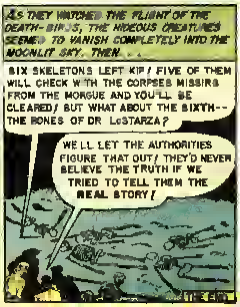
HE'S DECOMPOSING FAST! UGH! I CAN'T BEAR TO WATCH IT! I MUST FREE MARNO!

I--I'M ALL RIGHT NOW, KIP! I'M A BIT DIZZY, THOUGH! WH--WHAT HAPPENED?
NO TIME TO TALK NOW! WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS CHARNAL HOUSE!
I MUST KEEP HER FROM SEEING THOSE VULTURES FEEDING ON THE CORPSES!

GOOD GRIEF! THE WHOLE BUILDING IS COLLAPSING! WE'RE GETTING OUT JUST IN TIME!


THAT'S THE END OF DR LOSTARZA AND HIS HOUSE OF MADNESS! WHEN THE RAY MACHINE BROKE, HIS OWN SPELL OVER DEATH, IT BROUGHT ABOUT THE DESTRUCTION OF EVERYTHING CONNECTED WITH RIM!

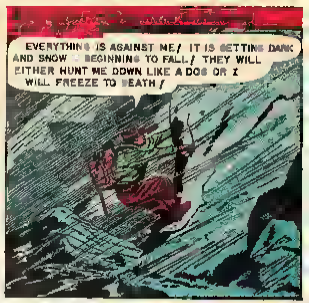
LOOK! ONLY THE VULTURES ARE LEFT AND THEY'RE FLYING AWAY!


AS THEY WATCHED THE FLIGHT OF THE DEATH-BIRDS, THE HIDEOUS CREATURES SEEMED TO VANISH COMPLETELY INTO THE MOONLIT SKY. THEN...
SIX SKELETONS LEFT KIP! FIVE OF THEM WILL CHECK WITH THE CORPSES MISSING FROM THE MORGUE AND YOU'LL BE CLEARED! BUT WHAT ABOUT THE SIXTH--THE BONES OF DR LOSTARZA?
WE'LL LET THE AUTHORITIES FIGURE THAT OUT! THEY'D NEVER BELIEVE THE TRUTH IF WE TRIED TO TELL THEM THE REAL STORY!

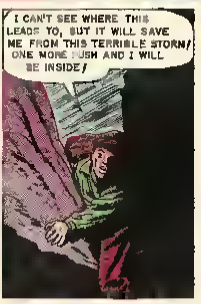
In the TIME-TROLLS' SINISTER Clutches

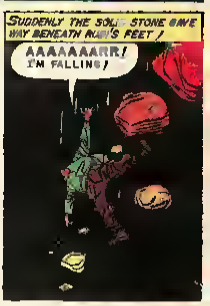
IN THE MAJESTIC MOUNTAINS OF SWITZERLAND NESTLE MANY SMALL TOWNS, FAMOUS FOR THEIR BEAUTIFUL CLOCKS - BUT FOREMOST AMONG THESE IS SEYER, WHERE CLOCKMAKING IS A FINE ART. RUDI GAUSS WAS HERE APPRENTICED TO WILHELM ZORN, A VERY EXACTING MASTER, WHO COULD NOT ABIDE A SINGLE MISTAKE. RUDI'S CLUMSINESS INCREASED AS HE QUAILED UNDER THE CHOLERIC OUTBURSTS OF ZORN, UNTIL ONE DAY
BUT MASTER ZORN, PLEASE, I HAVE TRIED VERY HARD! OW!
BAH, YOU INCOMPETENT BUTCHER! HERE, TAKE YOUR MISERABLE WORK AND GET OUT!
YOU... YOU STRUCK ME! YOU VILE-TONGUED SLAVE-DRIVER! I HAVE TAKEN YOUR INSULTS LONG ENOUGH! BUT YOUR BLOWS, NEVER!
WHAT! YOU DARE SPEAK TO ME LIKE THIS, YOU INSOLENT LOUT! I'LL... I'LL...
BEFORE I LEAVE, TAKE THIS TO REMEMBER ME BY!
ACH! MY HEART! THE PAIN, IT STABS LIKE A KNIFE! I CAN'T BREATHE! ARRRR!

HIS HEART HAS STOPPED BEATING! HE'S DEAD! I DIDN'T KILL HIM, BUT THEY WILL ACCUSE ME OF MURDER! I MUST FLEE!


EVERYTHING IS AGAINST ME! IT IS GETTING DARK AND SNOW BEGINNING TO FALL! THEY WILL EITHER HUNT ME DOWN LIKE A DOG OR I WILL FREEZE TO DEATH!

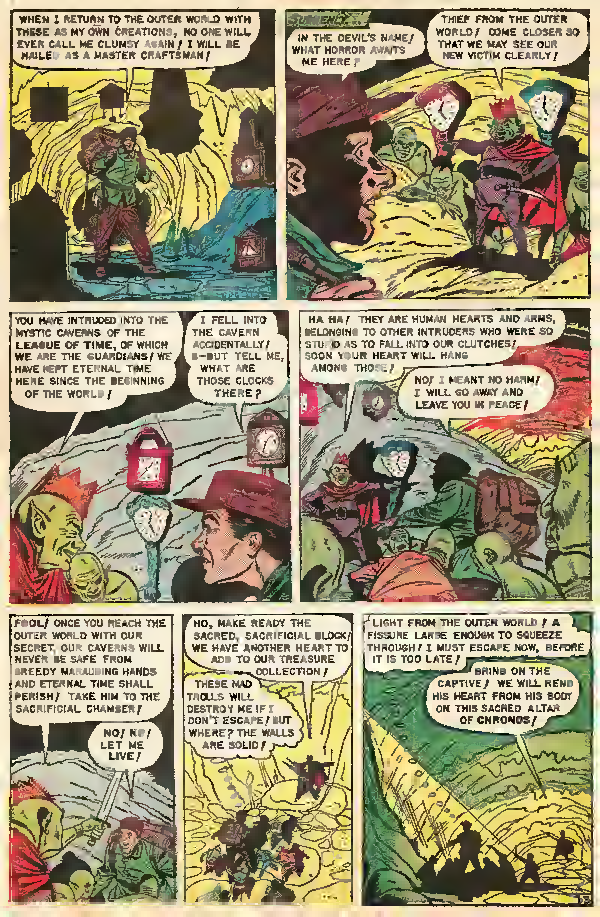
THE STORM INCREASED IN ITS FURY. RUDI GASPED FOR BREATH AGAINST THE ICY TORRENTS OF SNOW...
I MUST FIND A SHELTER! MY STRENGTH IS FAILING FAST! WHAT'S THIS? A CREVICE!


I CAN'T SEE WHERE THIS LEADS TO, BUT IT WILL SAVE ME FROM THIS TERRIBLE STORM! ONE MORE PUSH AND I WILL BE INSIDE!


SUDDENLY THE SOLID STONE GAVE WAY BENEATH RUDI'S FEET!
AAAAAAARR! I'M FALLING!

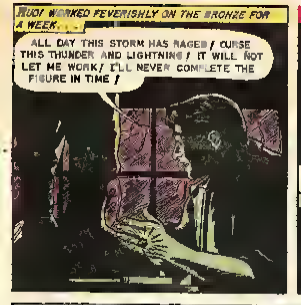
WHEN RUDI AWOKE FROM HIS PLUNGE INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS...
WH—WHERE AM I? THE FALL... YES, I FELL INTO THIS STRANGE CAVERN! ALL THESE MAGNIFICENT WATCHES AND CLOCKS! WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

WHAT A COLLECTION OF RARE TIMEPIECES! EACH WORTH A FORTUNE! ABSOLUTE WORKS OF GENIUS AND NO ONE HERE TO GUARD THEM! I WILL FILL MY KNAPSACK BEFORE I LEAVE THIS CAVERN!

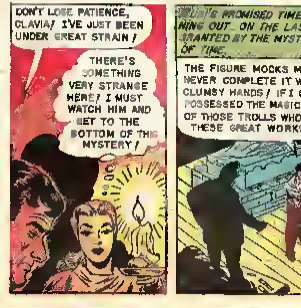

WHEN I RETURN TO THE OUTER WORLD WITH THESE AS MY OWN CREATIONS, NO ONE WILL EVER CALL ME CLUMSY AGAIN! I WILL BE HAILED AS A MASTER CRAFTSMAN!
SUDDENLY...
IN THE DEVIL'S NAME! WHAT HORROR AWAITS ME HERE?
THIEF FROM THE OUTER WORLD! COME CLOSER SO THAT WE MAY SEE OUR NEW VICTIM CLEARLY!
YOU HAVE INTRUDED INTO THE MYSTIC CAVERNS OF THE LEAGUE OF TIME, OF WHICH WE ARE THE GUARDIANS! WE HAVE KEPT ETERNAL TIME HERE SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE WORLD!
I FELL INTO THE CAVERN ACCIDENTALLY! B—BUT TELL ME, WHAT ARE THOSE CLOCKS THERE?
HA HA! THEY ARE HUMAN HEARTS AND ARMS, BELONGING TO OTHER INTRUDERS WHO WERE SO STUPID AS TO FALL INTO OUR CLUTCHES! SOON YOUR HEART WILL HANG AMONG THOSE!
NO! I MEANT NO HARM! I WILL GO AWAY AND LEAVE YOU IN PEACE!
FOOL! ONCE YOU REACH THE OUTER WORLD WITH OUR SECRET, OUR CAVERNS WILL NEVER BE SAFE FROM GREEDY MARAUDING HANDS AND ETERNAL TIME SHALL PERISH! TAKE HIM TO THE SACRIFICIAL CHAMBER!
NO! NO! LET ME LIVE!
NO, MAKE READY THE SACRED, SACRIFICIAL BLOCK! WE HAVE ANOTHER HEART TO ADD TO OUR TREASURE COLLECTION!
THESE MAD TOOLS WILL DESTROY ME IF I DON'T ESCAPE! BUT WHERE? THE WALLS ARE SOLID!
LIGHT FROM THE OUTER WORLD! A FISSURE LARGE ENOUGH TO SQUEEZE THROUGH! I MUST ESCAPE NOW, BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE!
BRING ON THE CAPTIVE! WE WILL REND HIS HEART FROM HIS BODY ON THIS SACRED ALTAR OF CHRONOS!

YOU BLOOD-LUSTING DEMONS! I WILL TAKE SOME OF YOU WITH ME BEFORE I AM MURDERED!
AIEEE! SEIZE HIM! HE'S TRYING TO ESCAPE!
WE CANNOT FOLLOW HIM IN DAYLIGHT! HE MUST NOT REACH THE OUTER WORLD TO BETRAY OUR SECRETS! HURL YOUR KNIVES! KILL! KILL! KILL!
HEAR ME, YOU THIEF! FOR EACH CLOCK YOU HAVE STOLEN, YOU WILL HAVE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS TO LIVE, AND IN YOUR LAST HOUR WE WILL COME TO CLAIM YOUR HEART!
BAH! IDLE THREATS! THEY WILL NEVER FIND ME!
OH, RUDI, I HAVE BEEN SO ALONE SINCE FATHER'S DEATH! COME IN, COME IN! YOU ARE MOST WELCOME!
I AM DEEPLY SORRY, CLAVIA! IF I HAD KNOWN, I...I WOULD NOT HAVE GONE TO SEE MY UNCLE IN KREUZBACH!
YOU WILL TAKE FATHER'S PLACE, RUDI! IT IS ONLY FAIR, SINCE HE TAUGHT YOU THE TRADE!
YES, CLAVIA, AND I PROMISE TO MAKE THE FINEST CLOCKS IN BEYER!
TWENTY-EIGHT, TWENTY-NINE! AND ALL OF THEM MASTERPIECES! I WILL PRESENT A FEW OF THEM AT A TIME, AS MY OWN WORK, AND NO ONE WILL BE THE WISER! I WILL BE KNOWN AS A GREAT CRAFTSMAN! THEN, PERHAPS CLAVIA WILL REGARD ME FAVORABLY!
AND HERE ARE MY FIRST OFFERINGS, CLAVIA!
WHY, THEY ARE SO STRANGE AND BEAUTIFUL! RUDI, YOUR SKILL EXCEEDS EVEN MY POOR FATHER'S!

THOSE CLOCKS SOLD OUT FAST! THEY ARE CALLING YOU BEYER'S GREATEST CRAFTSMAN!
I WILL MAKE MANY MORE, CLAVIS! NOW I MUST GO TO BARON WALDSTEIN'S HOME TO REPAIR A LARGE CLOCK!
HERE IT IS! THIS OLD CLOCK STOPPED TWENTY YEARS AGO, ON THE DAY MY FATHER DIED, AND NO ONE HAS BEEN ABLE TO REPAIR IT SINCE! WHEN I HEARD OF YOUR RARE SKILL, I SENT FOR YOU!
I WILL TRY MY BEST, BARON!
I WILL FUSS WITH IT FOR A FEW MINUTES AND GO AWAY TELLING HIM THAT IT IS BEYOND REPAIR! WHAT DO I KNOW ABOUT INTRICATE CLOCK MECHANISMS? WAIT... THE DOOR IS OPENING BY ITSELF!
THE TROLLS! AHHH!
YES, RUDI BAUSS-- AND NOW YOU HAVE ONLY TWENTY MORE DAYS TO LIVE!
THEY'RE AFTER ME! IN THAT ROOM; THE TROLLS! LET ME PASS!
WHAT NONSENSE IS THIS? THERE'S NO ONE IN THAT ROOM! LET US GO BACK TOGETHER!
SEE, IT WAS JUST YOUR IMAGINATION, HERR BAUSS! THERE'S NO ONE HERE! BUT I'M OVERJOYED AT YOUR HAVING REPAIRED THIS OLD CLOCK! COME, I WILL WRITE YOU A HANDSOME CHECK!
Y-YES, THERE IS NO ONE HERE! OH... THE CLOCK? YES, THANK YOU!
RUDI'S FAME GREW. SEVERAL DAYS LATER HE RECEIVED THE GREATEST HONOR THE TOWN COULD BESTOW...
THIS CUP IS FOR THE FIRST PRIZE WON AT THE GENEVA EXHIBITION! BUT WE WOULD LIKE TO COMMISSION YOU TO CAST THE BRONZE FIGURE TO STRIKE THE HOURS OF THE TOWN CLOCK!
RUDI, HERE IS MY FATHER'S RING, WHICH IS MY PROMISE THAT I WILL MARRY YOU TWO WEEKS FROM NOW WHEN THE BRONZE IS COMPLETED!


RUDI WORKED FEVERISHLY ON THE BRONZE FOR A WEEK...
ALL DAY THIS STORM HAS RAGED / CURSE THIS THUNDER AND LIGHTNING! IT WILL NOT LET ME WORK/ I'LL NEVER COMPLETE THE FIGURE IN TIME!
THE LIGHTS...THE POWER HAS FAILED! AIEEE! WHAT ARE THOSE GHASTLY FACES DOING HERE? THE TROLLS HAVE RETURNED TO PLAGUE ME!
WE HAVE COME FOR THE SILVER TROPHY WHICH RIGHTFULLY BELONGS TO US, YOU THIEF! IT WAS OUR CREATIONS WHICH WON THE PRIZE!

I'LL SMASH YOU ALL TO BITS WITH THIS HAMMER, YOU UGLY DEVILS!
HA HA! SMASH AWAY, YOU MADMAN! FOR EACH CLOCK YOU DESTROY, YOU LOSE A DAY OF THE PROMISED TIME! TONIGHT WE CLAIM THE CUP, BUT SOON WE WILL RETURN FOR YOUR HEART! HA HA HA!
CLAVIA WAS ROUSED BY THE DESTRUCTIVE NOISES...
RUDI, HAVE YOU GONE CRAZY? WHY DID YOU DESTROY THOSE BEAUTIFUL CLOCKS?
I—I DON'T KNOW! I BECAME ANGRY AT THE CASTING OF BRONZE! IT JUST DIDN'T COME OUT RIGHT, SO I LOST MY TEMPER!


DON'T LOSE PATIENCE, CLAVIA! I'VE JUST BEEN UNDER GREAT STRAIN!
THERE'S SOMETHING VERY STRANGE HERE! I MUST WATCH HIM AND GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS MYSTERY!
RUDI'S PROMISED TIME WAS RAPIDLY RUNNING OUT ON THE LAST EVENING GRANTED BY THE MYSTIC LEAGUE OF TIME...
THE FIGURE MOCKS ME! I'LL NEVER COMPLETE IT WITH MY CLUMSY HANDS! IF I ONLY POSSESSED THE MAGICAL POWERS OF THOSE TROLLS WHO CREATED THESE GREAT WORKS!
WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
YOU ARE A GREAT HOAXER! NOW I KNOW THE CLOCKS ARE NOT YOUR OWN PRODUCTIONS! YOU PROBABLY STOLE THEM FROM A MUSEUM! I WILL EXPOSE YOU TO THE WHOLE TOWN!

I LOVE YOU, CLAVIA, BUT MY SECRET IS MORE IMPORTANT! YOU MUST DIE!
RUDI! NO! LET ME GO!
AIEEEE!
THE HOUR STRIKES! WE TROLLS OF THE MYSTIC LEAGUE OF TIME HAVE COME TO CLAIM WHAT IS RIGHTFULLY OURS — YOUR HEART!
AWAY FROM ME, YOU MISSHAPEN MONSTERS! BACK, OR I WILL CRUSH YOU WITH THIS HAMMER!
HE LOST HIS BALANCE, AND—
THE HOT MOLTEN METAL! AIEEEE!
IT IS TOO FANTASTIC TO UNDERSTAND! FIRST CLAVIA'S DEAD BODY IS FOUND! THEN THIS BRONZE FIGURE, A MASTERPIECE OF THE FINEST SORT, LOOKING EXACTLY LIKE RUDI, APPEARS! AND WHERE IS RUDI?
ACH, HE IS GONE! IT MAKES ME DIZZY TO THINK ABOUT IT!
AND LOOK! THE FIGURE HAS ONLY ONE ARM! AND HOW IN THE WORLD DID RUDI GET THAT BRONZE FIGURE UP THERE BY HIMSELF BEFORE HE DISAPPEARED?
HA HA HA! OUR NEW TREASURE NOW BEATS ETERNAL TIME!
HA HA HA HA!
THE END